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241 clearing and protects it more or less effectively against the bush-pigs. Until the whole circuit of this fence is completed it is necessary for some people to live temporarily in the garden, where a smoking fire and an occasional shout are sufficient to scare away the intruders. Sometimes a man will lie in wait by moonlight hoping to spear a pig among his taro, which is a dangerous game and results in many casualties. The various traps and snares which are meant for pigs and others spoliators of the garden will be described under Hunting.

There is little to say concerning the harvesting. A woman gathers from time to time enough for her family's immediate wants, and the taro tops will be replanted. There are thus a number of plots at different stages of advancement in every woman's garden. Sometimes, however, when all the gardens of a clan are well stocked, there will be a simultaneous harvesting to furnish forth a feast. The products of the garden are then loaded ostentatiously upon platforms in the village before their final distribution to the guests.

251 [184] Coco-nuts are placed under a tabu when a large feast is pending and, as they fall, are accumulated in long lines on the ground, or else strung to poles set up as a tall pyramid in the centre of the village. In the southern part of the division yams are kept in a *harasi* or yam-house, the actual repository being a small dark attic under the gabled roof, while the lower story, merely a raised platform, is used as a sitting-place. Only two other methods of food-storage are worth mentioning. *Tauga* nuts are strung together on poles and suspended over the house fires, where they become black and dry; and *Puga* nuts are concealed in holes in creeks, where the moving water in the course of several months purges away their poisonous properties.

Hunting

224 262 Although hunting is only a secondary phase of the food quest, the hunter is distinguished by some skill and ingenuity, by a remarkable keenness for meat, and by a very sensible catholicity of taste. Bush-pigs, wallabies—of the bush and of the grass-lands—rats, birds, lizards, frogs, and

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614 778 784 (c) *As the Naterari or Village Tabu Post.* The *heratu* appears again in its most interesting character as the village tabu post. In many parts of the Territory it is the custom long before a feast to set up some tangible sign of tabu upon the coco-nuts. Among the Orokaiva this sign commonly takes the form of a wooden post or pillar, roughly carved and painted, and this post should properly speaking be of that particular wood which the clan owns for its *heratu.* This, however, cannot be a universal rule, because the *heratu* is often a grass or some small plant; but it may be said that when the *heratu* is a tree the tabu post is a stump of that tree. (In the other cases it may be a post of some alternative wood, or—a frequent substitute—one or two wands of the very light timber called *pamba* tied horizontally to a palm.)

Among the Aiga such a post is called *naterari*, and this word will be used as an alternative for tabu post. The *naterari* will be described more fully in Chapter XIII, but I may here anticipate one or two points in that description because they throw some light on the nature of the *heratu.*

614 778 784 169 In the first place the feast for which the *naterari* is set up is a mortuary feast; it is in honour of, or placation of, certain departed spirits. Further, offerings are made to it as if to the departed spirits; it is hung about with mementos of the dead; the feast is laid out before it, and it is called upon to witness the food; it is treated and disposed of with something like reverence; lastly, it often bears a faint and sometimes a decided anthropomorphic character. These various points show that the *naterari* is closely associated with the dead man, and they do much to justify the suggestion that the wooden pillar actually represents the dead, or even that it stood originally as a crude model.

The Heratu as Ancestor

614 778 Having described the uses of the *heratu* I may now endeavour to explain them. The fact of first importance is that the *heratu* of the clan is constantly referred to as 'our ancestor'. The words used are *evobo* and *ahije*; the former (which in this connexion is the usual one) seems always to

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(2) The clan is usually exogamous in practice, though by no means strictly so (vide p. 131). 614 778

(3) The clan commonly, in the typical case always, takes its name from the *beratu* or, more strictly, is synonymous with the *beratu* (vide p. 122).

(4) The clan uses its *beratu* first and foremost as a badge.

(5) The *beratu* is called an ancestor (though the Orokaiva does not really believe that his ancestor can be plant or tree).

Thus far it would seem the *beratu* has conformed very nearly to the tenets of totemism. It remains to be considered whether the clan possesses any magico-religious sentiment for its *beratu* such as typically unites the group and its totem.

The evidence is here somewhat conflicting. Generally speaking the plant emblem (except as *naterari*) is treated with no semblance of respect or reverence. In clearing the bush a man will fell his *beratu* tree without a thought; if it bear edible fruit like *topu*, the wild fig, he will eat it; if it be, as in one case it is, *ambe* or sago, he will not forswear one of his principal means of subsistence. There is a large clan, the *Umondaba*, one of whose *beratu* is nothing more nor less than 'Water'.

In one or two instances, however, informants have claimed that they will not cut down their own tree; though such are distinctly exceptional. No case has come to light of a useful *beratu* which its owner will not use. With the rare bird *beratu* the case is almost the same. A Diriu man, ex-constable, averred that he had shot many *diriu* (blue pigeon) for his master, and would be only too glad to shoot and eat another if I would lend him a gun. Perhaps at first he was like the other who 'sighed as a member of the cockatoo totem but obeyed as a policeman', but his scruples are long since gone if he ever had any. A man whose subsidiary *beratu* is the bird *Kombu* says that, while he would not hesitate to kill it (if he could get near it), he would still refrain from eating it. It is apparently for reasons of sentiment alone that he would not eat it, for he declares there would be no evil effects upon him if he did (as I believe he might) yield to the temptation. 614 778 784

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614 778 784 On the other hand, however, a man of the Bangai-unji, or 'children of the eagle-hawk', who use one of its speckled feathers for their mark, avers that he would neither kill nor eat the bird; and, further, volunteers that if a *bangai* fledgling, being caught and kept in the village, were to die, it would not be eaten or thrown away, but buried. Lastly, there is one isolated note which may have some significance. The bird *Hororo* (mentioned on p. 113) belongs especially to a certain man Erupa. Should its cry be heard near the village, the people would say, 'Erupa will be successful in the hunt to-day'.

551 606 778 In passing I may mention a point of some interest. Among the Orokaiva there are certain strict rules of etiquette between relatives by marriage (particularly between the man and his parents-in-law), exemplified by a very strict name-avoidance. Now, although a man will cut down his own *beratu* tree without mercy, he will hesitate to do the same with a tree that happens to bear the name of his *atovo* or *imboti*, i.e. his father-in-law or his mother-in-law, and may request one of his companions in the clearing to fell this particular tree for him. Similarly he will not eat any food, animal or vegetable, which happens to be synonymous with either of his parents-in-law. Now this rule is based on sentiment; there are, as far as my knowledge goes, no magico-religious sanctions to it; and where a similar tabu is observed with regard to the *beratu* we may probably assume that this is likewise no more than a sentimental avoidance.

778 The foregoing evidence has been set down for what it is worth. On the whole there would appear to be no very special regard for the *beratu*, though here and there will crop up a strong manifestation of such regard. It may not be surprising that this is relatively more marked in the few cases of birds than in those of the usual botanic *beratu*, because the former, with their more definite personality, are in themselves likelier objects of regard than the latter.

In fine it is of little consequence whether the plant emblem be called a totem or not; it will be obvious that it is very much like one. There is in my own mind little doubt as to how the system came into being. The *beratu* is a synony-

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their villages and subjecting such prisoners and wounded men that fell into their hands to such fearful tortures that the Notus were panic-stricken, deserted their villages, and appealed to me for help.'[1] It seems probable, however, that this passage refers rather to mutilations than to an intentional infliction of pain, which, indeed, the oldest informants affirmed was never a feature of the raid.

Brought home by the raiders the corpse of the victim was set upright in the village, still attached to its pole. During the night there was dancing to the accompaniment of *bui* and drum—properly the largest and most old-fashioned of the drums, viz. the *ino*. In the morning the body was taken down to the stream and cut up in the running water, in order, as I was told, to wash away the blood. Various portions were distributed as they are in the case of a pig, and little odds and ends were given to the children, who played at roasting them in the fires.

It was formerly the custom, I understand, to set up skulls of victims on a *gaga* or small platform in the village, just as pig-jaws are to be seen nowadays ranged along a branch of an old croton scrub. The pig-jaws are mainly in the nature of trophies, though it is said that to throw them away and lose sight of them would have an ill effect on hunting thereafter. I cannot say what were the motives for keeping human skulls, but presumably the same reasons would hold good.

Tabus and Purification of the Slayer

The actual slayer abstained from eating any of the victim's body. This rule was rigidly observed, though no satisfactory reason could be given. It may be remarked that the owner of a pig never eats any part of it when it is presented to another at a feast and distributed. But this seems to be no more than a point of etiquette, and perhaps offers no parallel. Beaver, who lays stress on the fact that the slayer must not eat of the slain, adds: 'Small portions of the liver, ceremonially treated with symbolic herbs, may be *bitten* into by the actual killer;'[2] though of this he does not record any explanation. It is tempting to suggest that by this rite the

[1] *Annual Report*, 1902–3, p. 53. [2] *Ibid.*, 1918–19, p. 98.

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slayer is assimilating some of the courage and fierceness of his victim, though it must be remembered that the liver is regarded as the seat of fear as well as of these more warlike emotions, and, indeed, it is presumably by his very deficiency in these latter that the victim was unable to look after his liver.

The tabu on the flesh of the slain applies not only to the slayer but to his father, mother, and nearest relatives. If they were rash enough to partake, their genitalia would swell, their joints grow crooked, and their heads turn bald. (Though in the case of an old man, it was said that these results need not be feared.) In view of such alarming risks it seems likely that there was in the person of the slain something like infection to that of the slayer. Other details confirm this view. The Orokaiva has a lively dread of *baupeni* (or elephantiasis of the scrotum) and swelling of the joints—both of which afflictions are seen in the Division. The slayer immediately removed his *bo*, or perineal band, and wore a leaf or nothing until he reached home and could effect a change of clothing: this was a precaution against *baupeni*. If he had dispatched the victim with a club he would straightway change this for another man's: on no account would he *shoulder* the club that struck the fatal blow, for he would run a risk of a swollen or distorted shoulder-joint.

Again the slayer must perform certain rites and observe certain tabus. He must not drink pure water out of the river, but only that which has been stirred up and made muddy by the feet of a non-slayer. He must not eat taro cooked in the pot, but only that which has been roasted in the open fire. He must abstain from sexual intercourse. These restrictions lasted for a few days and then the slayer ate the same purificatory stew (*suna*) which is given to initiates at the end of their seclusion (see p. 193). Among the Binandele I witnessed a mock demonstration of a peculiar rite which immediately preceded the eating of the *suna*. The slayer climbs into a small tree which contains a nest of those large and aggressive insects commonly called 'green' ants. The tree should properly be of the kind called *Bobo*, which

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is always swarming with them. While he crouches in a fork of the tree, branches are broken and laid over him so that he is almost completely covered and thoroughly bitten. Having endured this for some time, he climbs down and eats the *suma*, steaming himself over the dish and sponging his joints with handfuls of the stewed leaves. Another rite (also performed at the end of the initiate's seclusion) was to break a coco-nut above the slayer and souse his head with the milk.

It seems likely that all these observances and tabus are in a sense not only purificatory but defensive. As a rule, informants have no explanation to offer, but I have been informed directly that they are meant to drive away the *asisi*, or spirit, of the slain man. In support of this view I may quote what W. N. Beaver has written: 'I am not disposed to the sole view that the killer is "unclean". It seems to me rather that rites are necessary to throw off the power of the ghost or ghosts of the slain. . . .'[1]

Adoption of the Victim's Name

There is a very common practice, already referred to in Chapter VII, which we may be tempted to associate with the same idea. This is the practice of adopting the name of the slain. A man, originally named Koga, for instance, has killed another named Amburi: henceforward he, the slayer, is known by the name of Amburi, the slain. This custom is very common, and has been noted by others, so that it is unnecessary to give a succession of examples. It does not follow that the slayer entirely abandons his original name, which, I am told, may still be used occasionally by his more immediate friends; but his ordinary name is certainly that which he has taken from his victim. When a warrior of distinction has accounted for a number of slain he does not take the name of each in turn, but continues, as a rule, to be known by that of the first. This, however, cannot be an invariable rule, for a certain Ehari of Wasida, who can name no less than seven victims of his own hand, is known by the

[1] 'The Use of Emblems or Insignia of Man-killing among the "Orokaiva" tribes of the Mamusi Division', *Annual Report*, 1918–19, p. 97.

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881 The internees must avoid being seen by people of the village—in particular, it would seem, by their own fathers 784 and mothers. Sexual intercourse is prohibited. Chinnery and Beaver speak of other tabus: 'Should a boy happen to talk over loudly, one of the guardians would say, "Be silent, I will thrust a spear through the floor". Should a boy happen to drop taro through the floor, he would be killed.' This latter penalty is, of course, no longer inflicted in these slip-shod days, and personally I am very doubtful whether such severity could ever have amounted to a rule.

Début and Decoration

881 The initiate is not called an *ehumi* (or *mviha*), i.e. a 'new child', until he or she has terminated the seclusion and made a formal début. This is a spectacular occasion, the main purpose of which is perhaps to do honour to the initiate. It is signalized by the youth's first appearance in the feather head-dress, which thenceforward he is entitled to wear. Hitherto it has been strictly forbidden him, so much so that I have known a serious quarrel between two men resulting from the fact that one of them had given feathers to the other's younger brother before the right to wear them had been formally granted. The following description is drawn mainly from a ceremony which I witnessed near Divina Kovari in the Hunjovarehu country.

On the day of their formal reappearance the initiates, who have remained unwashed during their long internment, are taken down to bathe at early morning. They then gather 881 in the bush beyond sight and earshot of the village, and in 302 this sylvan tiring-room undergo the lengthy and laborious 361 process of being decorated. Each sits on a mat and places himself entirely in the hands of the man who is dressing him. There are many others watching or helping: with a party of twelve youths and four girls at Divina Kovari, there must have been seventy or eighty onlookers. The tails of hair which have grown long during seclusion have red streamers tied to their extremities. In the middle they are gathered tightly together and bound with bark-cloth, so as to form a base for the mass of feathers which is to be tied on to the

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881 vestiture was over, the *ebamei* crowded on to the *obu* platform at the end of the village on which were already strewn heaps of high-smelling pig flesh. It was by now growing dusk, but there was still enough daylight for them to make a brilliant patch of colour against the dark background of forest trees. The reason for this move on the part of the *ebamei* was said variously to be (1) that all the people should see them, (2) that they should see all the people, and (3) that they should see all the pig meat.

881 785 During the whole of this time the *ebamei* have had to support the weight of their *kokumbari* feathers and ornaments, to which has now in most cases been added that of their *otobu*; and they have neither drunk water, nor, except for banana and sugar-cane, broken their fast since morning.

881 786 [533] These ordeals, however, must continue throughout the night, which is occupied with singing and dancing and with the *ai sumbasiona*, or abusing of the women. This latter consists of highly obscene choruses and action songs, to which the women respond in kind and with no lack of spirit. It may be that under the circumstances morality is loosened. I quote a sentence of Chinnery and Beaver's: 'In ordinary circumstances an initiation is a time of somewhat general licence, promiscuous intercourse being permitted between any initiated man and woman.'[1] Witnesses have assured me that such promiscuity is confined to the initiation ceremonies. The initiates bear no part in it, but between their elders it is unrestricted. No husband might object if another man made free with his wife, for, it was said, he would fear retaliation by sorcery if he interfered. Needless to say I have no more than verbal evidence for this licence, but there is little doubt that at these times it does occur.

881 784 Next morning the *ebamei* are subjected to a rite called *ate-ate*, which appears to mean literally 'demonstration'. Once more they sit in a row on the logs, each with a man behind him armed with a stout stick. In front of the initiates stand their respective mothers holding a taro in the left hand, and the sharp peeler of oyster or coco-nut shell

[1] *Loc. cit.*, p. 77.

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called *kari* in the right. When all is in readiness the women deftly slice off a piece of the taro, and with one motion send the fragment and the peeler across the head of the initiate to fall at the feet of the man waiting behind. The latter immediately smashes the peeler with his stick. This, I am informed, is a formal way of ending the tabu on the mother's cooking. Formerly, it appears, the cooking for the *ebamei* has not been done by his mother but by his *tata*;[1] henceforward after this rite his mother may cook for him without risk of any kind. It is said that this rite is once more a safeguard against baldness, the idea of which an Orokaiva so heartily hates. In other parts there is the custom of breaking a coco-nut above the initiate's head and allowing the fluid to fall over him; and for this the same reason (somewhat often called into service) is given, viz. that of preventing baldness.

But the partial fast of the initiates does not come to an end with the performance of this *ate-ate* ceremony. They are merely allowed to remove the heavier of their ornaments, a relief for which they must be heartily grateful. They continue to eat nothing more than banana and sugar-cane, and are still denied water until on the following day they eat the *suna*.

By this time all the guests have dispersed, carrying with them their presents of food, and the village is left very untidy indeed after the feasting, but in comparative quiet. The eating of the *suna* is a rite which pertains only to the initiates and their fellow villagers. The *suna* itself is a stew, a highly composite dish of which the ingredients seem to vary in different tribes. At Divina Kovari they were taro, pig flesh, *Tauga* nuts (*Terminalia Okari*), the fruit of the tree *Puga*, *Ina* (a kind of *andropogon*), and the leaves of the trees *Ega*, *Houra*, and *Sigoga*, and of the croton *simbiri*. The whole is stewed with the addition of coco-nut oil and pig's blood. I have been unable to discover any magical significance in any of these ingredients: except for the leaves, they are all

[1] Though other informants have said that the mother does cook for her own son while secluded. The matter is evidently of no great consequence, and the prohibition of the mother's cooking is not universal.

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general distribution. At any rate they illustrate only one of the theories as to the transformation of human beings into *sovai*. It is after this disagreeable rite has been performed that the widow moves from the grave shelter to the house, or in former times, we may assume, from the ground under the house to the living room above.

It is the general rule for the widow to be secluded in the house of her husband, though in some instances it appears that the house in which the deceased lived is tabu, being avoided on account of fear. But such cases are evidently exceptional. In the event of evacuation it was not the custom to destroy the house but to leave it, probably surrounded by a tabu string. A house is left when it is thought to be 'haunted' by a *sovai*, and it is not only in a house of recent death that this supposed situation can arise. I have known a young married pair abandon a house because their baby was continually ailing, a fact which they attributed to the presence of a *sovai*. Similarly a whole village may be deserted if its inhabitants get the idea into their heads that it is haunted by malignant spirits.

It is only upon the widow, not upon the other womenfolk of the deceased, that rigid seclusion is enforced; though a mother will voluntarily remain for a long time at the grave of her child. In some tribes the widower undergoes seclusion. This is so, I understand, in the Wasida, Sangara, Sauaha, Yega, and Tain-Daware tribes. Among the Aiga and the Binandele he is not secluded. Of the other tribes I have no reliable information.

During seclusion the widow (or the widower) is engaged in making the mourning jacket *baja*—so called because it is made of *baja* (*coix lachrimae* seeds, or Job's Tears). She has no other work to do. She receives frequent friendly visits from the women of the village, who make her presents of food and assist her to make the *baja*, for which the seeds are gathered by her son or some relative of the deceased. She is not seen by the villagers, and her voice is supposed to remain unheard. Indeed, while living for some months in a village rest-house I was completely unaware that a widow was secluded in the house opposite, and that

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765 paraphernalia connected with the dead are ceremonially and
535 finally disposed of. On the other hand, the dance and drama
536 have their own intrinsic value as forms of art and amusement, and, furthermore, they commonly occur in connexion with the initiation and seclusion of a number of youths and girls.

765 The whole subject of dance and drama, however, will be
784 discussed in the next chapter. In the meantime I shall deal
778 with the tabu upon the food-supply which precedes the fourth stage, and which makes possible the large feast which is perhaps the most important feature of the proceedings in so far as they are of a mourning nature. The mark of this tabu is the *naterari* or tabu post, which has already been referred to in Chapter VIII, p. 117. As we saw there, it usually takes the form of a rough-hewn pillar or post, standing a few feet high in the open space of the village. Properly speaking it is made of the *heratu* wood of the clan; but when the *heratu* is not of a suitably solid nature the *naterari* may consist merely of a piece of light timber called *pamba* tied to the butt of a palm, or perhaps to a croton bush. *Na* means 'village', and *terari* 'to close up', as a creek is dammed up with stones, or as the hollow drum is closed at one end with the lizard skin. The Binandele word is *ao*, apparently a contraction of *ago* (another dialectal form): I cannot make any suggestion as to its real meaning. In Wasida the same object is called *itembari*, probably a compound of *i*, 'tree', and *tembari*, 'to place on top'. In Dobo-duru the word was *natembahije*: *na*, 'village', *temba*, 'to place on top', *ahije*, 'ancestor'.

Some months after the man's death the *naterari* is set up in the centre of the village, and from this moment the coconuts are not eaten green but allowed to ripen and fall, until at last there is a tremendous accumulation, perhaps laid out in lines on the ground or else piled on a mountainous tripod. Meanwhile the *naterari* has been standing in the village clearing as if silently watching the slow preparations, somewhat weatherbeaten by now, and with its originally garish make-up a little faded. It is, however, treated with a certain amount of care and respect. It is not uncommon to see a

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miniature four-legged shelter to protect it from the rain, with a gabled roof of sago thatch, and perhaps underneath the roof a little platform. On this platform may be found an old bamboo cylinder pipe, a lime gourd, perhaps a handful of withered betel-nuts; and besides these a few fragments—fresh or mouldy—of cooked taro. These are so placed for the spirit of the departed, or, to use the Aiga word, the *sowai*. It will come by night and refresh itself to that extent which is proper for a spirit, or as a native will say, with a twinkle in his eye, taking no more than an ant might eat. In addition to these offerings, there may be found certain mementoes of the deceased—an old banana-seed necklace, a shell bracelet, in one case a broken gourd that had been a urinary for an invalid and bed-ridden old man.

When the preparations for the entertainment are complete the *naterari* is removed, and with its removal the coconut tabu comes to an end. Normally, it would appear, the *naterari* stands through the time of feasting and is removed afterwards. Sometimes, I am told, the provisions for the feast are displayed before the post—row upon row of wooden dishes piled with cooked food—and it is called upon to witness the feast in its honour.

There is still something of reverence in the final disposal of the *naterari*. When I suggested chopping it up for firewood I was made to feel that this was rather a bad joke. In the inland village it was put aside in the outskirts of the bush, sometimes with a small platform close by for a continuation of the food offerings, and there allowed to decay. On the river Opi it is placed, with other paraphernalia of the dance, upon a raft; with some little ceremony this raft is guided into midstream and released to follow its unattended course toward the sea. Sometimes the *naterari* is stowed away in a house. At any rate it is not simply thrown away and disregarded. For this two reasons are given: first, that the *sowai* or spirit would be angry; second, that the people feel too sorrowful to treat the *naterari* thus.

It is worth referring to the forms or patterns of the tabu post. The variety is very great, for each example seems to

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called *Baigona* and were to be treated with affection and respect. They must be hailed and welcomed whenever they were seen; to kill or eat them was forbidden. These taboos extended to a number of other creatures—lizards, crocodiles, cuscus, and the like—all of which, in native belief, are commonly the reincarnations of departed spirits.

The originator of this cult imparted his knowledge of certain medicines, rites, and taboos to others, and this kind of individual initiation was passed on until there grew up a clique of '*Baigona* men', who might be called priests of the new cult, and who were to be found in villages as far north as the German boundary.

Meanwhile the horde of ignorant and gullible believers rapidly increased, comprehending little more of the new order than the general taboo regarding reptiles. The genuine *Baigona* men professed to practise healing, but there was another side to their activities: there is little doubt that they were sorcerers to a man, who held the masses in considerable fear and practised an easy kind of extortion. Together with other methods of professed healing they underwent themselves, and induced in their patients, paroxysms of a peculiarly horrible nature. These paroxysms became the general vogue among all who were affected by the cult, and this, together with the practice of sorcery and extortion, led the Government to discourage and suppress the movement. The craft of the *Baigona* men was virtually stamped out ten years ago, though in the interior of the Northern Division there are still to be found regular *Baigona* practitioners who, with a strange amount of confidence in themselves, continue to try their cures upon strangely confident patients. This practice, however, is thought by the natives to be against the law of the Government, and is therefore only in secret. Despite certain effects which it has left on native custom, the *Baigona* cult may be said to have died out. On the whole one is tempted to class it as thoroughly obnoxious.

It was very soon replaced by another movement,

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remote associations may seem causally effective to a native. Taimi happened to leave his lime-stick in his house; his mother, or his mother's spirit, spat on it; subsequently Taimi prodded his friend in the stomach with the stick, by now in some manner galvanized, and his friend was seized with a paroxysm.

I have already referred to certain individual Taro men of distinction. The number of those who follow the cult in the Northern Division is not to be computed, but there are among them men of distinction and reputation who may be called leaders and who might be if necessary catalogued. Their pre-eminence is due partly to their own personality (for it is not every native who has the makings of a magician), and partly to mere priority. Thus, if one man communicates the Taro to another, the latter will probably recognize the former as his superior. This respect for superiors may sometimes take a comical turn. To see a Taro man, his face covered with paint and his limbs with streaks of clay, his body stuck about with sprigs of coloured leaves, and his wits bemused by betel-nut—to see such a man offer a grave salute, in the exaggerated style of the Native Constabulary, to his superior, whose attire and demeanour even outdo his own, is almost as diverting to the European as it is impressive to the native. This habit of deference to the initiator results in a sort of hierarchy, very ill-defined, as might be expected, because the cult shows such a tendency to split up into minor sects, but nevertheless containing the seeds of an interesting development.

The disciple sometimes has to undergo a kind of probation. Having once acquired the Taro he must, for a considerable period (until, indeed, it is thoroughly established or ingrained into him), observe certain taboos. The chief of these is the taboo against washing. There are instances in which the enthusiastic acolyte forgoes the pleasures of a midday bathe for as long as eight months. When the Taro cult had crept insidiously into one of the mission schools, its presence was first

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detected—among a class of well-grown young females—by the missionary's nostrils. The reason for this taboo seems to lie in the supposed efficacy of running water, which will not only cleanse away impurity, but also carry off and dissipate the *mana* of the prophet. It is in keeping with this idea that the Taro novice be allowed, if necessary, to wash in *still*, swampy water. The taboos which are incumbent upon the professing Taro man will call for further description. The probationary taboo against washing should normally come to an end only with the permission of the superior who has been responsible for the novice's entry into the cult; but it must not be supposed that this rule is carried out in any strictness.

It sometimes happens that an aspirant grows tired of the restrictions which are imposed upon him; and even a qualified Taro man may voluntarily break through them and *ipso facto* relinquish his status. Thus we find 'resignations', sometimes because of the constant tiresome *jipari*, sometimes because of the taboo upon bathing, sometimes because the temptation of forbidden foods cannot be resisted. One man said he had given over the Taro because he was hungry for eels, *obiti*, which are banned to the faithful. Another, wounded in a village affray and temporarily incapacitated, had obtained a sort of absolution from the man who introduced him to the cult, and by bathing in a stream thus automatically ceased to be a Taro man.

It is entirely in keeping with native custom that payment should be made by the initiate to his superior, though such payment does not seem to be necessary or invariable. At any rate, it is not so much that the master makes a charge, but rather that the disciple makes a gift in return for services rendered. It is said that the improvement in the taro crop will amply justify the gratitude of the new Taro man to his teacher.

A man of Katuna—now a veritable hot-bed of Taro—had visited Buninia in the early days of the cult. Sleeping in the master's house he shook and dreamt simultane-

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probably much more often—the effect which he attributes to his medicine, i.e. the *jipari*, is due to a complex of excitement, bad example, and betel-nut.

As certain medicines are prescribed for the Taro man either to increase his own power or else to be transmitted by him to the taro itself, so on the other hand there are many restrictions placed upon him for negative, but similar, reasons. He is in fact dieted with some strictness, and the reasons which govern these food taboos are worth considering. In a great majority of cases the man who observes the taboo is completely ignorant of any logical basis for it: he has learnt it by rote, so to speak, having received it as part of the cult from his instructor, and not only has he never heard a sensible argument in its favour, but, if taxed for such an argument, can think of none save *ad verecundiam*. But sometimes one meets a native with a spark of imagination. The explanations which he may give of the taboos are not necessarily the original ones, but notwithstanding they are typical native explanations, and at least as good as the original. A few examples will show what real grounds there are for the prohibitions. *Pauri*, the cuscus, is forbidden because of the yellowish colour of its fur, dappled with brown spots. Should the Taro man eat *Pauri* it is likely that the taro leaf will develop similar properties instead of keeping the rich green colour which is indicative of health. *Auja*, the red pandanus seed, and *sasaru*, a kind of frog, are tabooed for the same reason. It was explained that the frog, when cooked, is of a yellow-brown colour which is unwholesome not so much for the Taro man as for the taro. *Ambe*, or sago, was avoided in some quarters because the roots at the butt of the palm are often exposed in a way that is not desirable for the taro tuber. *Imbaga* the crocodile, *wotomo* a kind of flat fish, and *obiti* the eel were 'too heavy'. The idea of weight seems to be associated very commonly with sickness, and it is felt that the Taro man who ate creatures in which this quality is so obviously embodied, would be endangering his power of healing.

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powers of healing. There are many more food taboos. Some of them may well enough be survivals from the *Baigona* cult (which placed a prohibition upon almost all creeping things), as they appear to have no very obvious bearing on Taro. Certain kinds of the taro itself were held to be injurious—only so, indeed, since the institution of the cult, for previously these forbidden varieties were eaten without any untoward result; Mr. Elder says they were given to his mission boys, ' who being unbelievers thrived on them '.

The taboo upon bathing has already been mentioned. It was evidently observed with a certain strictness and, in some cases at least, a breach of the taboo meant more than the mere loss of power. One Taro man of importance gave the following explanation for a lameness in the knee which had crippled him for eight months. Having used his spear too effectively in a village fight he was removed to jail, and there, under a regimen which took no heed of his priestly obligations, compelled to cut his hair and wash the smears of mud and white ochre off his body. The unfortunate prisoner's explanation still leaves one mystified: the dirt, mud, and paint being washed off the remainder of his body, concentrated in his knee and there brought on his lameness.

One important business of the Taro man's, viz. that of curing, will receive a fuller treatment in section 9, and is mentioned here only because it has to be included in a general list of Taro activities. A few additional matters of minor interest, however, may be referred to at this stage. One is the custom of hand-shaking. I am assured that the hand-grip was known as a form of greeting long before the advent of the new cult; but now it has become a rage. When a Taro man comes upon a number of men engaged in conversation and sitting, after their fashion, in a haphazard group on the ground, he will go from one to another and take the hand of each in turn. As a rule the hand-clasp is somewhat limp and unresponsive, though on occasion one may see two

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second category, viz. those caused by the spirits, that the Taro doctor is best qualified to deal. That the spirits of the dead may afflict their surviving friends with illness is an old Orokaiva doctrine; that the spirits of the taro can do the same is presumably a new doctrine, associated only with the new cult.

The native goes in real fear of his dead relatives and in perpetual anxiety lest he should offend them and incur their displeasure. This is probably the reason why a dead man's garden is taboo to his relatives: they fear he may infect the products of it out of sheer malice. If a man ate a banana which a *binei* had touched he would fall ill; so also if he ate one of the *binei* animals, i.e. one on which the dead was reincarnated; or, indeed, if he merely neglected the offerings and the observances which are due to the dead.

In the doctrines of the new cult it was maintained that a man might give offence to the actual taro spirit, and be punished by it with a sickness. Thus there were certain varieties of taro, perfectly wholesome, which were made taboo to the layman of the new cult. They were called *koropa*, or strong, and he ate them at the risk of illness. So again, according to Buninia and Yaviripa, taro might not be pulled without first consulting the Taro men. The taro spirits would be angry with one who was so disrespectful as to break this rule, and would enter into him and lay him up with a sickness.

It is not fair to pester a native for definite explanations of abstrusities. The dead or the taro may *influence* for evil the rash or irreverent, and this influence is felt to be a kind of spiritual possession. Just as the taro spirit may, in the accredited Taro man, be a fund of power, so in the layman who has rashly or ignorantly offended, it may be a source of sickness. We can only say that the native's conception of spiritual possession is not less hazy than our own.

The methods of the doctor are in the main directed towards freeing the patient from the evil influence. The

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bour. Theft is not altogether uncommon and in former times may have led to serious reprisals. An old man tells how he found a woman stealing his taro, and immediately dealt her a blow on the back with his pineapple club, with corrective but happily not fatal results. So also we find tales of ravaged gardens, tale-bearing, accusations, and the indeterminate duels in which the Orokaiva rejoices to find a vent for his anger. As prevention is better than cure, however, the garden is often guarded by some taboo sign—a few wisps of grass laid across the path, a thin tape of bark tied to sticks and encircling the garden, or some coco-nut leaflets knotted about the trunk of the palm. These are nearly always respected, partly through mere law-abidingness, partly because of the veiled threat of sorcery which they imply.

Besides these frail but effective safeguards, the gardener used occasionally to resort to practical measures more after the manner of spring-guns and man-traps. The *oivo* is a miniature pitfall, lined with sharp little spikes, which, I was assured, are sometimes tipped with *inja*, or sorcerer's medicine. Concealed with leaves they were placed in gardens, or more usually on tracks leading into the village, so that any sorcerer who came prowling after dark might make a false step and betray his presence by a yell. Nowadays, I am told, the practice has been abandoned, and the only cases in which I heard of the *oivo*'s actual effectiveness were those in which the wrong man had been caught—perhaps naturally, as a guilty trespasser would lie low and conceal his injuries. A certain well-known character, ex-Corporal Bia, at the Mambare mouth, went, as he says, to inspect his brother's pineapples; but the inspection was cut short, just at the stage, perhaps when the sampling might have begun, by a step into the *oivo*.

(*e*) *Harvesting, Storing, &c.* The taro is planted from time to time, and used as it matures. Almost daily the wife will go out to her garden, do a little weeding, and fill her *eti*, or string bag, with freshly pulled taro. If she

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more usual cases of sun-magic, where a man is charged with causing a drought, it seems natural enough to employ this agency. We may suppose that it has become a set method and may therefore be employed without any thought as to its fitness for any special branch of activity.

A second agency regularly used by the sorcerer is that of weight or pressure. In the example given on pp. 173–4 we saw that the magician, after preparing his mixture, sat on it and even rocked his body to and fro in order to squash it the more effectively. Another method is to bury the mixture under a heavy stone which will exert just that gradual and unremitting pressure which suits the mood of the torturer. When a magical mixture is first concocted and stowed perhaps in the favourite receptacle, an internode of bamboo, the sorcerer will allow it to fall from his hand to the ground, or may throw it aloft and see it drop. If it meets the ground with a satisfactory thud, then it is assumed to have the requisite quality of weightiness; if it fall lightly he may bind it to a stone in order to make good the deficiency. Then, perhaps, he will bury it beneath his own mat, so that as he sits in his accustomed place he does so in the comfortable enjoyment of crushing his enemy.

The explanation of this method is similar, I believe, to that of the one just described, in which the agency of heat is employed. It is very common for an ailing native to say that he feels 'heavy' in part or the whole of his anatomy. The word, indeed, describes well enough the weakness or lassitude and the absence of sensations of energy which are common symptoms of tropical illness. It is just the weight of certain creatures, such as the crocodile, which constitutes the stated reason why they are sometimes tabooed to the doctor. If, I have been asked, the physician eats anything so heavy, how can he expect to banish the heaviness of the sick? Examining the varied contents of a man's *betava*—the string bag in which he carries the small indispensables of life—I once came upon a lump of very light pulpy wood, resembling

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Boninia informed me that the precautionary ritual is as follows:—"No weapons of war may be carried in gardens. Gardens are to receive the greatest attention, and to be well fenced and continually weeded. No food is to be wasted. That which cannot be eaten is to be given to the pigs, as also the garbage. Food is to be handled carefully, lest it should be bruised or broken. When cooked it is to be boiled in a vessel. The practice of burning food in the fire must be abandoned."

The song of the "Food-Spirit" is:—"*Ba taba Ai-adara!*" "*Ba porovi Ai-adara!*" *Ba* signifies taro, and *taba* and *porovi* varieties of the same. Each kind of taro is thus recited and followed by the song-words *Ai-adara* (in which words the worship lies). Following the song of the taro there comes the worship of the sugar-cane (*do*), "*Do beguma Ai-adara*," and of the banana (*bido*), "*Bido oira Ai-adara*," the varieties of both being mentioned. Other garden-foods follow in sequence.

In January 1915 Tongua of Duvira was passing a heap of taro lying in the sun outside the village of Buadi on the middle Gira River. The people of this village had not adopted the cult. Tongua fell into a fit, and on reviving, gathered the taro and placed it in shelter. At the same time he took the opportunity of disclosing the teachings of the "Food-Spirit," who he said was very angry with the person that had left the taro lying in the sun.

The practices I have been describing being undesirable were for a time abandoned. Each man who had been "visited" took a long swim in the Mamba River to shake off the "sickness." Boninia, however, informed me that it would not be possible for him to shake off the "sickness" so long as he remained on the Mamba, and that he had received permission to visit the Kumusi. My friend Mr Beaver and I visited the dancers in December, and requested them to perform the Kava-Keva, but they excused themselves on the ground that the "Spirit" had left them, and that the "sickness" was not a condition to be produced at will. As a general practice, the Kava-Keva no longer exists. But isolated cases have been noticed throughout the two divisions as far as Buna, and particularly in and around the headquarters of the Anglican Mission, which is near the mouth of the Mamba. The noted prophets of the various tribes and villages on the coast have adopted the "Spirit," and the Kava-Keva and Kekesi cults threaten to break out in strong force along the whole northern coast from the Gira to Buna at any time, the cults, however, maintaining their rivalry.

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coast as far as the old Anglo-German boundary and for a long way up the rivers of the Kumusi Division. Moreover, the cult is still spreading. Needless to say, the Baigonas have to pay for their instruction. One or two men in a village go through a period of tuition, and, on their return, initiate the rest of the villagers, not into the positions which they themselves hold, but into a belief in their new powers. This is effected by a ceremony in which the people are smeared over with some stuff from the bush, and the Baigona gives each one a smack and sends him to wash in the sea. The ceremony gets its name from the "washing." Dr Copland King has seen Baigonas use massage on a patient. They massage the arms, for instance, down to the fingers, and then, as they say, pull Baigona out from the finger tips. The young men of the village, standing round the patient, sing a song, which seems to be the usual string of meaningless words. Only two recognised drugs are used, —viz. *Euphorbia pilulifera*, the "asthma herb of Queensland," which is burnt with the coral when preparing lime for chewing with betel-nut, and *E. Drummondii*, also used medicinally by Australian settlers, and eaten with paw-paw when chewing the nut. Various other plants are employed as drugs, but only such as are beneficial. All this was obviously a very subtle move on the part of Maine. How can the Government interfere in such circumstances? At the same time, the Baigona have powers of life and death, because if they do not choose to give the patient these drugs, or, in other words, if the patient does not pay enough for them, he dies; for the Papuan, like most savages, is peculiarly susceptible to impression, and can fall sick, or even die, without any corresponding physical cause. The Baigona does not work in his garden. He will not drink plain water, but only coconut milk. He pays more attention to dressing his hair and decorating his face with red paint than other people; he has not much else to occupy his time, as either from fear or in payment his village companions do his garden work for him. Very often during the evening in the village the Baigona goes into a fit, passing into a trance. It begins with violent shivering, after which the man falls to the ground and becomes insensible, uttering spasmodic bursts of rapid talk. His people cover him with a mat, and sit around listening and applauding. Dr Copland King has not been able to make sense of what he says on such occasions, and does not know whether the people understand it either. The main feature of the cult is the prohibition to kill snakes, crocodiles, monitor lizards, and

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668 [784] sharks, as these are protected by the master-snake Baigona; the prohibition being enforced by heavy penalties.[1] On one occasion Mr Oelrichs ordered his police to fire at a crocodile out at sea. That night some of these men had a dream or vision; the Baigona came to them and said, "Why were you shooting at my friend? You can't be friends with me if you do that." Three of the police were laid up the next morning in consequence of this vision. Here is another instance. One morning a certain Mr Oates killed a snake. Mr Oelrichs noticed that the natives around him looked very grave, so he jokingly said, "Oates, you have killed a Baigona." That evening at 7.30, although there had been no rain all day, the whole parade ground was some feet under water, and at 9.30 there was a break away in the creek, and it swept Mr Oates' house, furniture, and the whole of his allotment into the sea, all he had left being what he stood up in. None of the houses and allotments on the other side were touched. "Could any native want anything more convincing than that?"[2] This new cult, which has taken deep root, appears to be purely a native growth; there is no evidence that it has borrowed anything from the white man.[3]

2. The Prophet of Milne Bay.—Towards the end of 1893 a prophet arose in Milne Bay, at the extreme south-east end of the island. This prophet was a young man named Tokerua (Mr Abel calls him Tokeriu), who lived in the village of Gabugabuna, on the north side of the bay. He made a great stir among the natives. At night-time he mused beneath a sacred tree, from the branches of which a Spirit spoke to him; in the morning his face was transfigured, and he looked like a man whose wits had left him. The message which he delivered was to the effect that during the following moon

[1] The Baigonas claim both to make rain and to prevent it from falling; they also deal in other matters appertaining to the natives, and are consulted by them.

[2] These details are taken from the *Annual Report, Papua*, 1911–12, pp. 129 ff. (A. E. Oelrichs), and 1912–13, pp. 134 ff. (Rev. Copland King, M.D.).

[3] A partial explanation of this cult may perhaps be found in the consideration urged by Sir William MacGregor: "In many places no native will kill a snake. Evidently snake cult is an ancient form of veneration and worship connected with ancestors over a large area of British New Guinea. Advantage is taken of this by the sorcerer in some districts, who does not scruple to threaten death by snake bite, and to encourage snakes about his premises." *Ann. Rep.*, 1897–98, p. 47. It is interesting to observe how a cult of this kind is copied elsewhere. *Cf.* Mr G. H. Nicholls' account of an old policeman, named Tai-imi, who, profiting by what his travels afield had taught him, set up as a sorcerer on the Gira River, and had his snakes, invisible to ordinary eyes, but nevertheless very deadly and real to any who obtained the illwill of the sorcerer. See *Annual Report, Papua*, 1910–1911, p. 129.

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there would be a violent thunderstorm. From the black clouds would dart vivid flashes of lightning, and there would fall a deluge of rain. Then a furious gale was to arise which would work untold havoc in certain places along the coast. The foundations of the earth would be shaken, and, as a result of the earthquake, an eruption would take place in the middle of the bay between Wagawaga and Gabugabuna, causing a new island to appear above the waves. In consequence a tidal wave would arise and spread further desolation and engender the submergence of all the coasts thereabout for two or three months. Thus destruction would be the lot of the unbeliever, but those would be spared who complied with the behests of the Spirit, as transmitted by the prophet. First and foremost, no man might possess anything introduced by the *dimdim* (white man). He must part with his treasured match-boxes, tomahawks, knives, and other appliances, which rendered life pleasant or reduced toil; for these objects were the symbols of foreign domination, and in the new era old ways would be re-established. There would be a reversion to the stone age, implying the revival of ancient wont and custom and of the religion of their forefathers. New things must pass away, and the golden age of the past must be resuscitated in the present. As an outward and visible sign of the state of grace the faithful were to wear in their armlets a *bisare*, or long narrow ribbon of leaf that almost reached the ground. Finally, they were to burn their houses and take to the highest peaks in the ranges,—for, like the cities of the plain, the old habitations were to be swept out of existence by the catastrophes of nature. As the houses of foreigners are generally built close to the shore, it would seem as though the wheat was to be removed with the tares, since the tidal wave could scarcely be expected to discriminate between the two types of houses. The faithful villagers of Gabugabuna actually left their old village on the shore and built new houses not more than half a mile inland, but on the same level. They were told to go inland. And they did. But it did not occur to these faithful souls, or to their prophet, that the mundane laws of hydrostatics would inevitably cause their new abode to be flooded if the coast were submerged. Such is unreasoning faith. When the catastrophe was past, the wind would change to the south-east, the quarter from which blow refreshing winds during the greater part of the year, and the land would be covered with gardens of yams, taro, and other native food, and the trees would be laden with delicious fruits. The south-east wind would waft a huge vessel into their